

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO 81641

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2005-039-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: COC36393

PROJECT NAME: Power line in Hammond Draw for NW Pipeline

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: 6th Principal Meridian
T.2N., R.100W.,
sec. 4, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$.
sec. 9, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$.

APPLICANT: Moon Lake Electric Association Inc.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS The staked route varies slightly from the map attached to the application. A GPS map of the staked route is attached as Exhibit B.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Background/Introduction: This action was originally part of EA 05-028, but has been separated for clarity of analysis.

Proposed Action: Moon Lake proposes the construction of an overhead power line to serve a cathodic protection station on the Northwest Pipeline. The line will be 7.2 kV single-phase capacity will be 1400 feet long, 20 feet (0.64 acres) wide and incorporate 4 poles. The route station will be a straight line generally following the Hammond Draw Road.

The project will consist of single wood poles with aluminum conductors. Raptor protection is incorporated in the structure design. Any open holes left overnight will be covered with planks to protect people and wildlife from injury. Access will be from existing roads and along the right-of-way. All surface disturbances will be confined to the right-of-way. No blade work will be needed. Rubber tired vehicles will be used for construction. Construction and maintenance activities will not be performed when soil conditions are too wet to adequately support vehicles and equipment. If equipment creates ruts in excess of three inches deep, all construction or maintenance will be postponed until conditions are suitable.

Moon Lake Electric will keep the power lines in safe and usable condition at all times in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code. If maintenance is required for immediate repair of the power lines, Moon Lake will be responsible for the rehabilitation of disturbed areas. There will be no PCB or any hazardous material used in the construction, operation, or maintenance of the power line.

Construction will begin within 60 days of BLM approval and will take 5 to 10 days. Authorization will be by amendment to existing rights-of-way COC36393. The application map (Exhibit A) and Plan of Development (Exhibit C) are attached and incorporated by reference.

No Action Alternative: The power line would not be authorized or constructed and there would be no additional impacts.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD:

NEED FOR THE ACTION: Applicant as been requested by NW Pipeline to provide service to pipeline facilities.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: Pages 2-49 thru 2-53

Decision Language: “To make public lands available for the siting of public and private facilities through the issuance of applicable land use authorizations, in a manner that provides for reasonable protection of other resource values.”

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH: In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a

finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: There are no special air quality designations or non-attainment areas in the vicinity of the proposed action.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would result in short term, local impacts to air quality during and after construction, due to dust being blown into the air. However, airborne particulate matter should not exceed Colorado air quality standards on an hourly or daily basis.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None.

Mitigation: None

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed power line route has been inventoried at the Class III (100% pedestrian) level (Bernard 2001, Hand 1994, Späth 2000, Fetterman 2004). One site is recorded in the proposed project location and it was tested due to a trespass problem (M^cKibben, 2002). The site was determined ineligible in consultation with the Colorado SHPO and no further work is recommended on the site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: It appears that known sites in the area will be avoided by all construction. There would be no new impacts to cultural resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to cultural resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: If, at any time during augering the pole holes or other soil disturbing activities large, obvious artifacts or suspicious quantities of charcoal stained earth are turned up the operator shall cease operations immediately and notify the Authorized Officer (AO) of the find. The BLM shall cause the find to be examined to determine if the find is significant as early as is possible. The operator may not resume operations until receipt of written authorization from the AO.

The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop

activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: The principal noxious weed known to exist in the vicinity of the project area is Whitetop (*Cardaria draba*). The invasive alien annual cheatgrass occurs throughout the area as a function of past grazing and soil disturbance.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There will be some soil disturbance as a result of the proposed action providing safe sites for the establishment of noxious and invasive species. There will be no negative impact if the stated mitigation is applied in a timely manner.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There will be no change from the present situation.

Mitigation: Control all noxious and invasive species using materials and methods approved in advance by the authorized officer.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: The project area is comprised predominately of Wyoming big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, greasewood and shadscale with a sparse herbaceous understory consisting of cheatgrass, western wheat grass and halogeton. Immature juniper is scattered along the north-facing slope. Several migratory bird species fulfill nesting functions in these habitats from late-May through mid-July including Vesper's sparrow, lark sparrow, meadow lark and horned lark. All of these species are abundant and widely distributed throughout the Resource Area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed power line is schedule to be installed prior to the return of nesting migratory birds and therefore should have little, if any impacts on nesting success. In the unlikely event the project should be delayed into the nesting season, it should have minimal, if any impacts on nesting behavior as surface disturbance would extend about 25 meters off the roadside, an area that likely assumes little to no bird nesting activity. In addition, construction will be completed in a relatively short time frame (5-10 days) with little, to no surface disturbance involved.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no action authorized that would have potential to further influence migratory bird nesting activity.

Mitigation: None

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE ANIMAL SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Affected Environment: The White River valley serves as an activity hub for nesting and wintering populations of threatened bald eagles, however, there are no large trees within the project area that would provide suitable nesting or roosting substrate for this species. The only lower valley nesting attempts have occurred downriver, near the Utah state line. Bald eagles may opportunistically forage along the White River corridor. The lower White River is also designated critical habitat for the Colorado pike-minnow, with the nearest occupied habitat located eight miles downstream.

There are no state sensitive or state threatened species known to inhabit or derive important benefit within the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Installation of additional powerpoles may have the potential to increase perching opportunities for bald eagles and other raptors. To remedy this, powerpoles involved in this action will be designed to deter all raptor perching (i.e., crossarms and pole top) and remain effective in preventing raptor electrocution, such that the project does not attract increased bald eagle use and increase the risk of highway mortality, opportunities for potential poaching or line strikes.

This project would have no conceivable influence on riverine function or water quality and would have no affect on Colorado pike minnow.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no action authorized that would have potential to disrupt or influence any threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species or their habitats.

Mitigation: Powerpoles involved in this action will be designed to deter all raptor perching (i.e., crossarms and pole top) and remain effective in preventing raptor electrocution.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: Public lands associated with the project area have little potential utility for, and are generally not important in, sustaining local special status species populations. Installation of this power line as conditioned would have no further influence on the utility or suitability of these habitats for bald eagle winter foraging use and therefore, would not adversely influence the current or future status of the public land health standard.

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: There are no known hazardous or other solid wastes on the subject lands. No hazardous materials are known to have been used, stored or disposed of at sites included in the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: No listed or extremely hazardous materials in excess of threshold quantities are proposed for use in this project. While commercial preparations of fuels and lubricants proposed for use may contain some hazardous constituents, they would be stored, used and transported in a manner consistent with applicable laws, and the generation of hazardous wastes would not be anticipated. Solid wastes would be properly disposed of.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No hazardous or other solid wastes would be generated under the no-action alternative.

Mitigation: The applicant shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by the proposed actions.

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Affected Environment: A review of the Colorado's 1989 Nonpoint Source Assessment Report (plus updates), the 305(b) report, the 303(d) list and the Unified Watershed Assessment was done to see if any water quality concerns have been identified. The proposed action is in the Hammond Draw watershed. Hammond Draw is identified in segment 13a, which are all tributaries to the White River from a point immediately above the confluence with Piceance Creek to a point immediately above the confluence with Douglas Creek.

Segment 13a is classified as a "Use Protected" reach. Its designated beneficial uses are: Warm Aquatic Life 2, Recreation 2, and Agriculture. The antidegradation review requirements in the Antidegradation Rule are not applicable to waters designated use-protected.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There is no reasonable likelihood that power line installation would have an influence on the water quality condition of the White River.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: The proposed action will not affect the drainages ability to meet the Land Health Standards.

WETLANDS AND RIPARIAN ZONES (includes a finding on Standard 2)

Affected Environment: The proposed power line originates from an existing power line located approximately 300 m (at its closest point) to 600 m (at its terminus) from the White River.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There is no reasonable likelihood the power line installation would have any influence on wetland or riparian areas. The nearest power pole is situated approximately 300 m from the White River along an abandon terrace. All other poles involved with this action are located south of Highway 64 approximately 400 – 600 m from the White River. There would be no possibility of increased sedimentation to the water source as this action involves minimal surface disturbance.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on wetland or riparian areas under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems: Development of this power line would have no conceivable influence on the condition or function wetland or riparian zones and therefore, would have no influence on continued maintenance of associated land health standards.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:

No ACEC's, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, Wilderness, or Wild and Scenic Rivers, threatened, endangered or sensitive plants exist within the area affected by the proposed action. For threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species Public Land Health Standard is not applicable since neither the proposed nor the no-action alternative would have any influence on

populations of, or habitats potentially occupied by, special status plants. There are also no Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action.

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The following elements **must** be addressed due to the involvement of Standards for Public Land Health:

SOILS (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Affected Environment: The soils have been mapped in an order III soil survey by NRCS which is available for review at the field office. Refer to the table below for the type of soils affected by the proposed action.

Power line N to S	Soil Number	Soil Name	Slope	Ecological site	Salinity	Run Off	Erosion Potential	Bedrock
935-1400 ft	21	Cliffdown-Cliffdown Variant complex	5- 65%	Salt-desert Breaks	<2	Medium to slow	Slight to moderate	>60
0-934 ft	95	Uffens loam	0-5%	Alkaline Slopes	4-8	Slow	Moderate	>60

These soils are deep, well drained on alluvial valley floors, fans, and low terraces. They are calcareous mixed alluvium derived dominantly from sandstone and shale. The native vegetation is mainly desert shrubs and grasses. Typically, the topsoil layer is a light brownish gray fine sandy loam about 4 inches thick. Permeability of these soils is moderately slow. The majority of the soils encountered are in the Alkaline Slopes range site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The power line construction would have minimal impacts to soil resources. Compaction may occur in the vicinity of the pole placement. This impact would be short-term.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Impacts are not anticipated from the no-action alternative.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils: The proposed action will not cause the upland soils to *not* meet the Land Health Standards.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The proposed action occurs entirely on an Alkaline Slopes ecological site. Vegetation on this site is sparse and is primarily greasewood, Wyoming big

sagebrush, low rabbitbrush with a grass component which is primarily western wheatgrass and cheatgrass.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action will create soil disturbance providing further sites for the proliferation of cheatgrass. Prompt revegetation with the seed mixture proposed will provide competitive vegetation sufficient to preempt cheatgrass dominance of the site.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There will be no change from the present situation

Mitigation: Promptly recontour and revegetate all disturbed areas with Standard Seed mixture #2

Seed Mix #	Species (Variety)	Lbs PLS/ Acre	Range sites
2	Western wheatgrass (Arriba)	3	Alkaline Slopes, Clayey Foothills, Clayey Slopes, Claypan, Mountain Shale
	Pubescent wheatgrass (Luna)	2	
	Russian wildrye (Bozoisky)	2	
	Crested wheatgrass (Fairway/Ephraim)	2	
	Yellow sweetclover (Madrid)	0.5	
	Fourwing saltbush (Wytana/Rincon)	2	

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial): The plant community on this ecological site does not meet the Standard due to the presence of cheatgrass on this site. The proposed action will not have a material impact on meeting the Standard.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The proposed power line is located approximately 300 m (at its closest point) to 600 m (at its terminus) from the White River.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action involves minimal surface disturbance and therefore would have no influence on the condition or function of aquatic wildlife or habitat associated with the White River. See also discussion in riparian section.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on existing aquatic wildlife or habitat under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): Development of this power line would have no conceivable influence on the condition or function of these aquatic habitats or wildlife associated with them

and therefore, would have no influence on continued maintenance of associated land health standards.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The sagebrush and greasewood habitats surrounding the project area constitute severe winter range for mule deer. While raptors such as red-tailed and rough-legged hawks may opportunistically forage throughout the area, these habitats do not provide suitable substrate for raptor nesting. No narrowly distributed or highly specialized species or sub specific populations are known to occur in the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Power line installation would have no measurable influence on the availability or utility of seasonal forage or cover resources in the project vicinity (i.e., shrubland or herbaceous ground cover as habitat components for all resident wildlife). The prevailing 2004/2005 winter weather conditions have been marked by unseasonably mild temperatures, including diminished snow pack and early emergence of herbaceous forage. While deer use may be prevalent along the White River corridor, snow pack would not impede travel for deer temporarily displaced by activity. Deer appear to be in remarkably good condition and minor elevation of energy demands attributable to avoidance of this localized power line would have no effective influence on big game nutrition or energy balance. The level of activity associated with this project is minimal (<10 days in duration and involving little surface disturbance). It is recommended that no condition of approval be applied to this action as the aforementioned conditions meet the exception criteria for the WRFO severe winter range timing limitation stipulation.

Installation of additional powerpoles may have the potential to increase perching opportunities for all raptors. To remedy this, powerpoles involved in this action will be designed to deter all raptor perching (i.e., crossarms and pole top) and remain effective in preventing raptor electrocution.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on existing wildlife or habitat condition under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: See discussion regarding raptor electrocution and perch deterrents in T&E Mitigation section.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): The project site meets the land health standard for animal communities. Installation of the power line as proposed would have no functional influence on attributes of community health.

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, only those brought forward for analysis will be addressed further.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access and Transportation		X	
Cadastral Survey	X		
Fire Management	X		
Forest Management	X		
Geology and Minerals	X		
Hydrology/Water Rights	X		
Law Enforcement		X	
Noise		X	
Paleontology			X
Rangeland Management		X	
Realty Authorizations			X
Recreation		X	
Socio-Economics		X	
Visual Resources			X
Wild Horses	X		

PALEONTOLOGY

Affected Environment: Proposed is a 1400 ft, 4 pole, 7.2 kV single phase power line to a cathodic protection station for the NWP Piceance Basin Lateral: This proposed power line is located in an area mapped as the Wasatch Formation (Tweto 1979) which the BLM has classified as a Condition I formation, meaning it is known to produce scientifically important fossil resources.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There is a possibility that scientifically important fossil resources could be impacted by power line construction should it become necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock to make a hole of sufficient depth for a stable power pole location. It will be extremely difficult to identify important fossil resources due to the small disturbance caused by the power pole hole. Only the largest vertebrate remains would likely be recognized during excavation operations.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to fossil resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during project activities, the operator will immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials, and contact the authorized officer (AO). The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best option for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

REALTY AUTHORIZATIONS

Affected Environment: The proposed route will cross State Highway 64 (COC057150) and follow the general route of the Hammond Draw Road which has multiple use authorizations.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed power line will be authorized as an amendment to COC 036393, Moon Lake's existing line on the north side of Highway 64. Access for construction and maintenance of the line will use the Hammond Draw Road.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: The application would be denied and the power line would not be constructed.

Mitigation: Moon Lake Electric should coordinate with Colorado Department of Transportation for safe and appropriate methods of crossing Highway 64. Access along Hammond Draw Road should not interfere with existing uses.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed action would be located within a VRM class III area. The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would follow an existing road and would not dominate the view of a casual observer traveling along this road. The level of change to the characteristic landscape would be low and the objectives of the VRM III classification would be retained.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no additional environmental consequences.

Mitigation: None

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: This action is consistent with the scope of impacts addressed in the White River ROD/RMP. The cumulative impacts of this type of activity, was addressed in the White River ROD/RMP for each resource value that would be affected by the proposed action.

REFERENCES CITED

Bernard, Mary C.

2001 Class III Cultural Resource Inventory for the Uintnah (sic) Basin
Communications Project, Meeker, Rio Blanco County to Utah-Colorado Border, Moffat County.
Intermountain Archaeology Services, Jensen, Utah.

Fetterman, Jerry

2004 Cultural Resource Survey of Three CPS Sites in Rio Blanco County, Colorado.
Woods Canyon Archaeological Consultants, Inc., Yellow Jacket, Colorado.

Späth, Carl

2000 Suncor Fletcher Gulch CBM Prospect Wildcat Wells SH-1, Sh-2, Sh-3 and Sh-4
Class III Cultural Resource Inventory. Greystone Environmental Consultants, Inc.,
Greenwood Village, Colorado.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED: None

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Caroline Hollowed	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	Air Quality
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
Michael Selle	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources Paleontological Resources
Mark Hafkenschiel	Rangeland Management Specialist	Invasive, Non-Native Species
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Wildlife
Bo Brown	Hazmat Collateral	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
Caroline Hollowed	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	Water Quality, Surface and Ground Hydrology and Water Rights
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Wilderness
Caroline Hollowed	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	Soils
Mark Hafkenschiel	Rangeland Management Specialist	Vegetation
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Terrestrial and Aquatic
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Access and Transportation
Ken Holsinger	Natural Resource Specialist	Fire Management
Robert Fowler	Forester	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Mark Hafkenschiel	Rangeland Management Specialist	Rangeland Management
Linda Jones	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation
Keith Whitaker	Natural Resource Specialist	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	Natural Resource Specialist	Wild Horses

Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (FONSI/DR)

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE: The environmental assessment and analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures (listed below) result in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

DECISION/RATIONALE: It is my decision to approve the construction, operation, and maintenance of a power line extension to serve a cathodic protection station on Northwest Pipeline as described in the proposed action, with the mitigation measures listed below. This development, with mitigation, is consistent with the decisions in the White River ROD/RMP, and environmental impacts will be minimal.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

1. If, at any time during augering the pole holes or other soil disturbing activities large, obvious artifacts or suspicious quantities of charcoal stained earth are turned up the operator shall cease operations immediately and notify the Authorized Officer (AO) of the find. The BLM shall cause the find to be examined to determine if the find is significant as early as is possible. The operator may no resume operations until receipt of written authorization from the AO.

2. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator will immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or

the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

3. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

4. Control all noxious and invasive species using materials and methods approved in advance by the authorized officer.

5. Powerpoles involved in this action will be designed to deter all raptor perching (i.e., crossarms and pole top) and remain effective in preventing raptor electrocution.

6. The applicant shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by the proposed actions.

7. Promptly recontour and revegetate all disturbed areas with Standard Seed mixture #2 in the table below:

Seed Mix #	Species (Variety)	Lbs PLS/Acre	Range sites
2	Western wheatgrass (Arriba)	3	Alkaline Slopes, Clayey Foothills, Clayey Slopes, Claypan, Mountain Shale
	Pubescent wheatgrass (Luna)	2	
	Russian wildrye (Bozoisky)	2	
	Crested wheatgrass (Fairway/Ephraim)	2	
	Yellow sweetclover (Madrid)	.5	
	Fourwing saltbush (Wytana/Rincon)	2	

8. If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during project activities, the operator will immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials, and contact the authorized officer (AO). The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best option for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

9. Moon Lake Electric shall coordinate with Colorado Department of Transportation for safe and appropriate methods of crossing Highway 64. Access along Hammond Draw Road shall not interfere with existing uses.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING: The power line ROW will be monitored by White River Field Office Staff on a five-year interval.

NAME OF PREPARER: Linda L Jones

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline Hollowed

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:


Mark Haynes
Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 3/11/05

ATTACHMENTS: Exhibits A and B (Maps)
Exhibit C (POD)
Location Map of the Proposed Action

Location of Proposed Action CO-110-2005-039-EA

